

3/19/49

*Yukon Pky*  
**ALASKA**  
**PERM. FILE**



50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

YUKON

PRESBYTERY

*Eagle 1899 - Fairbanks 1949*

## HISTORICAL STATEMENT

A PETITION ASKING FOR THE ERECTION OF A YUKON PRESBYTERY TO INCLUDE ALL THE WORK IN THE INTERIOR OF ALASKA AND THE ARCTIC REGION WAS PRESENTED TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING AT MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA IN 1899. THE PETITION WAS GRANTED AND DR. S. HALL YOUNG WAS DIRECTED TO FORM THE PRESBYTERY.

THE FIRST MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY TOOK PLACE AT EAGLE, ALASKA ON JULY 26th, 1899.

DR. S. HALL YOUNG WAS BOTH CONVENOR AND TEMPORARY MODERATOR. HE WAS ELECTED THE FIRST MODERATOR OF YUKON PRESBYTERY AT THIS MEETING. REV. M. EGBERT KOONCE WAS ELECTED STATED CLERK.

THE ROLL WAS AS FOLLOWS:

PRESENT: REVS. S. HALL YOUNG, D.D.  
J. W. KIRK  
M. EGBERT KOONCE

ABSENT: REVS. HORATIO R. MARSH, M.D.  
SAMUEL R. SPRIGGS  
HARRY P. CORSER

## HISTORICAL STATEMENT

A PETITION ASKING FOR THE ERECTION OF A YUKON PRESBYTERY TO INCLUDE ALL THE WORK IN THE INTERIOR OF ALASKA AND THE ARCTIC REGION WAS PRESENTED TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING AT MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA IN 1899. THE PETITION WAS GRANTED AND DR. S. HALL YOUNG WAS DIRECTED TO FORM THE PRESBYTERY.

THE FIRST MEETING OF THE PRESBYTERY TOOK PLACE AT EAGLE, ALASKA ON JULY 26th, 1899.

DR. S. HALL YOUNG WAS BOTH CONVENOR AND TEMPORARY MODERATOR. HE WAS ELECTED THE FIRST MODERATOR OF YUKON PRESBYTERY AT THIS MEETING. REV. M. EGBERT KOONCE WAS ELECTED STATED CLERK.

THE ROLL WAS AS FOLLOWS:

PRESENT: REVS. S. HALL YOUNG, D.D.  
J. W. KIRK  
M. EGBERT KOONCE

ABSENT: REVS. HORATIO R. MARSH, M.D.  
SAMUEL R. SPRIGGS  
HARRY P. CORSER

## BARROW MISSION, Barrow, Alaska - 1890

Bound by ice and snow for seven months of the year, Barrow, Alaska stands at the Northernmost tip of the American Continent. To this sparsely settled land came the Gospel which "has turned the world upside down." The first witness for Christ reached Barrow July 30, 1890. He was M. L. Stevenson, of Ohio. He made his first home in the relief stations operated by the United States Government, and there he opened the first school in this part of Alaska. Stephen Segevan, one of the members of this first school recalls that every morning Mr. Stevenson would let the students stand up and he would close his eyes and talk. Thus the day was begun with prayer though the students could not understand what the teacher was saying or doing . . . .

Because there was no interpreter Mr. Stephenson labored for many months without being able to make the people understand what this new religion was. However, a Christian Eskimo from down the coast later arrived in Barrow, and with his help the message became clear. "In 1896 Professor Stephenson returned to Ohio, and Rev. Richard Marsh, M. D., and Mrs Marsh then took charge of the mission." Faithful teaching was rewarded and on Easter Sunday 1899 a church was organized with thirteen Native communicants.

In 1905 a three masted sailing vessel was wrecked at Barrow. Captain Cook had been freighting materials to Barrow for the construction of a government school building. During his stay in Barrow he assisted in the moving of the first church building from near the beach to a site about fifty yards west of the present location. In the summer of 1899 Rev. Samuel Spriggs and his wife came to assist in the work. Within two years of the organizing of a church the membership had grown to thirty and Peter Koonooya, a native Elder of the church, represented Yukon Presbytery in the General Assembly at Philadelphia.

Rev. and Mrs. Spriggs taught in the government school built in 1906. Both Dr. Marsh and Rev. Spriggs learned the Eskimo language and were able to preach in the native tongue as well as translate the hymns, Scriptures and the Shorter Catechism....

In April 1909 while the Marsh family was on furlough and Dr. Marsh and Elder Leavitt were on a missionary trip to Wainwright and Icy Cape the church building burned. The present building was constructed in 1910 with the help of the natives and some of the white people living in the village...

Dr. and Mrs. Marsh took leave of Barrow in 1911, and during the years which followed there were no regularly appointed missionaries until 1915. However, the work of the church was continued under the direction of Rev. Cram and Mr. Richardson, teachers in the Government School. In 1915 Dr. and Mrs. Frank Spence were appointed to the work, and the following year the church building was enlarged and the steeples added.

The building of the Mission Hospital in 1920 and 1921 brought Dr. and Mrs. Henry Greist to the work in August 1921. Dr. Greist transferred from the Mission at Cape Prince of Wales to take charge of the new hospital.....

Under the ministry of Dr. Greist the Presbyterian Mission Board assumed the responsibility for the Wainwright area....

Fire again visited destruction on the mission destroying the old manse in 1924. The following year Dr. and Mrs. Greist went on furlough to the States.

During the years from 1925 to 1929 Dr. A. W. Newhall took charge of the work of the hospital and the church. On March 17, 1929 Dr. Newhall died. His body was buried in the Barrow cemetery. Mrs. Newhall remained on the Field until after the arrival of the Greists the same year. Mrs. Greist was made Head Nurse of the hospital and served as community worker . . The new manse was built in 1929 and 1930.

In 1934 at the direction of Yukon Presbytery, Dr. Greist examined Percy Ipalook for licensure to the Presbyterian Ministry. After successfully passing the examination Percy was so licensed. He later took special work at the Seminary at Dubuque, Iowa and was then ordained to the Ministry of the Presbyterian Church. He was the first Eskimo to be ordained by our church . .

Dr. and Mrs. Greist served the Mission until he reached the retirement age in 1936. At that time the hospital was turned over to the Alaska Native Service and Rev. and Mrs. Fred Klerekoper accepted the appointment to Barrow. During the years of Rev. Klerekoper's ministry in the mission he initiated trips to the eastward from Barrow to carry the Gospel to those who lived in the scattered settlements along the coast....

The outbreak of the second World War brought new problems and aggravated old ones. Eskimo Christians who had been struggling against the evils of their own background were now confronted with the evils of war, and were plunged into a modern civilization with wartime ideals. The Missionary found himself ministering not only to the Eskimo people of the village, but also to many of the Sea Bees who were stationed at Camp Barrow.

In the Spring of 1945 the Klerekopers closed their work in Barrow and later accepted an assignment under the Board of Foreign Mission. Roy Ahmaogak, native lay worker, was assigned to care for the work of the mission until a new missionary arrived.

Rev. and Mrs. Samuel Lee arrived in Barrow in March 1946 to take up the work. In April of the same year, Roy Ahmaogak represented Yukon Presbytery at the meeting of the General Assembly and remained in the States for a year of special work and study. On his return in June of the next year he was ordained to the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in his home church at Barrow. He thus became the second of his people to receive the ordination vows. He was appointed as missionary pastor to the Wainwright Church and is now serving in that capacity.

In the past ten years the population of the village of Barrow has about doubled. During the years since 1946, the employment of the Eskimo men in the Navy Construction camp has hastened the change which the village was to undergo. Almost over night a hunting and fishing village has become an industrial village and the faith of the people has been tested to its very foundation. In the past two years the population of the village has been increased by nearly two hundred.

An effort has been made to minister to the increasing needs of the village, to the servicemen and civilian workers at the construction camp and to the people scattered in the areas around Barrow, and bolster the faith of the church so that it may be victorious in the adjustment which is being made. A new Sanctuary is being planned (the piles have been set) and the membership of the church is working toward the support of their own church.

---Written by Rev. Samuel Lee, Missionary

ST. LAWRENCE ISLAND - 1894  
Gambell; Savoonga

Some time in the early ninties a two-mast schooner brought the material to the shore of St. Lawrence Island to build the first frame house which was to be the school and dwelling for the first Missionary. The material was tied in bundles and pulled to shore with long ropes, then carried piece by piece to the site of the building. This was done without charge.

No one on the Island knew anything about carpenter work, they had never seen a house built of lumber. The carpenter brought tools to work with but only enough for himself. The Eskimo had no hammers or saws so they did next best by making hammers of the lower jaw bone of the walrus, thus the most of the nails were driven with walrus jaw bone hammers.

The Mission was completed that summer, the door locked and the key given to one of the chief men. They were very proud of the building but no one seemed to know what it was to be used for. Two or three years later a cutter stopped and Mr. and Mrs. Vene Gambell came ashore to spend five years with people who could not understand them, came to teach the Eskimo to read and write and the way of life through Jesus Christ our Lord. The courage that dwelt in the hearts of these pioneers of the North is something to be admired.

In the early days of the Mission work the young and old came to hear the legends of the strange people. It was many years before they understood the Gospel was not a legend but the way of life in the Saviour.

Mr. Gambell built a house for Patrick Womkon's father. This frame house was the first to be used by an Eskimo family. It still stands and Patrick is an elder of the church. After the five years term the Gambells went out. On their return to the Island with supplies on an old boat they were all lost. So sad were the people of Sevuokok that they changed the name of their village to Gambell in remembrance of their gracious friends.

The next year Mr. Wm. F. Doty came and it was through him the Eskimo learned of Thanksgiving Day. He invited the families to celebrate with him. He had the father to bring the family plate, which was a large wooden tray, and he filled it with beans, also gave each family a pot of coffee. The older people still talk about it. Dr. P. J. Lerrigo followed Mr. Doty. During Doctor Larrigo's term many people died in a measles epidemic. He left in 1901 and Doctor E. O. Campbell began his long work of nine years. He built a two room hospital and made a number of improvements in the village. Established the Native store and the Building and Loan fund. The reindeer herd was well established during his work on the Island. Dr. Cambell had many heart aches as well as joys. The lessons he taught were vital, living in the hearts and minds of the people to this day.

Probably the greatest of all the Missionaries to come to the Island was Miss Ann Bannan the praying nurse. Nearly the entire population of the Island accepted Christ Jesus and His way of life through her ministry. The two churches, Gambell and Savoonga, are strong organizations and are in a large degree responsible for the outstanding life of the two villages.

Many changes have come to the village over the period of half a century. One of the greatest chanbes is in the living conditions. There is not one old type Eskimo house in either village. The dwellings are well made lumber houses, well insulated and most of them are painted. Some still use the one room living quarters and sleep on the floor, but some have adopted the modern bed, table and chairs, stoves, cupboards and dishes.

The younger folks are changing their ideas about the living and following of the old customs. A few have had church weddings and wish to establish a home in the modern way. Modern education brings all the wants of modern times. They want a house of their own, furniture, radios, jewelry, cameras, fine suits and beautiful dresses. They want dishes, tables, chairs, innerspring mattresses, carpets and all that goes to make a modern home.

Some want a higher education than is possible to acquire here on the Island. Some have taken correspondence courses. There are now two girls attending Sheldon Jackson Junior College in Sitka. Several more are now working toward that end in their school work. This is very encouraging and has long been the wish of every missionary. It was the privilege of the Gambell church to send the Commissioner for Yukon Presbytery in 1948, to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, held in Seattle, Washington. This will probably mean more to the development of the two churches than can now be estimated. Some seemed to think Christians were very few but they have been set right by one of their own number.

Under the present regime the Government has full supervision of the schooling, oversight of the Native Store and the medical work. This is a good set up and well managed, but there is a need of a small hospital and a well trained native nurse. It would be a wonderful place for a young Doctor to begin his practice. There are nearly 600 people in the two villages and every one of them needs medical attention some time throughout the year. Besides this, some need constant medical care. All surgery cases are sent to the hospital on the mainland and this is a real problem.

The prospect for the future is promising. There are many young people coming into the picture. They will have to be taught the way of life that will mean the most to them. This can come only through the church, by patient teaching and example. There is no industry on the Island and not much prospect of any in the near future. The spiritual life of the community has improved during the last year but there is much room for greater improvement. This, we believe will come in time.

Written by Rev. Elmer Parker

A HISTORICAL STATEMENT by The Rev. S. Hall Young  
(Transcribed by James H. Condit)

Early in the winter of 1902-1903, Rev. M. E. Koonce, Ph.D., who was the Presbyterian missionary of Rampart on the Yukon, hearing of the new camp on the Tanana, made the journey hither on foot, dragging his blankets and food on a handsled. He found a few cabins at Chena and at Fairbanks, and judging that Chena would be the chief town, he built a mission cabin there, preaching the first sermons at Chena and Fairbanks ever heard in the Tanana Valley. On his return to Rampart, he reported the prospects of the new camp to Rev. S. Hall Young, D.D., General Missionary for Alaska.

Dr. Young forwarded his report to the Board of Home Missions, and advised Rev. Charles F. Ensign, then stationed at Eagle, to go at once to the Tanana, and if advisable, erect a house of worship. Mr. Ensign accordingly made the long trip over the snow, landing at Chena in March, 1903. He erected a log building at Chena, to be used both as a church and as a hospital. He preached both there and at Fairbanks but thought that Chena was bound to be the permanent centre of population. He left the camp in June of that year returning to Eagle.

Dr. Young started from Skagaway June 18, 1903, intending to visit the Tanana, but meeting Mr. Ensign and Dr. Koonce at Rampart and receiving from them and from returning miners discouraging reports of the new camp, he continued down the Yukon, visiting the missions on Seward Peninsula, and wintering at Council.

In the spring of 1904, hearing from Dr. Koonce of another visit made by him to Tanana in February of that year, during which time he held services at Chena and Fairbanks, Dr. Young went to Nome, and took the first available boat up the Tanana.

In the meantime, Rev. Howard Frank had been commissioned by the Board to Chena and was on his way to the field. He arrived at Chena in the middle of July, 1904, and commenced there. A week later, Dr. Young came to Fairbanks. He secured the court house as an audience room and held services there every Sunday, alternating morning and evening services with the Episcopalians. He soon began to canvass the town for funds to erect a church and bought a lot on the South East corner of Cushman and Seventh Streets. The congregation elected a temporary board of Trustees of whom a Mr. Miller was chairman.

Building was commenced the middle of September. A small manse was first put up, and later a church, the latter being opened for services the first Sunday in November, 1904.

This is the date which is observed on anniversaries though it was the first Sunday in May 1905 when the church was formally organized with 23 charter members.

Thus November 6, 1949 will mark the 45th anniversary of the first services held in the original church building which is now Young Memorial Hall. Though we have received 108 new members during the past three years, dismissals and transferals to the reserve roll have kept the roll to 200 members at present; with 213 enrolled in the Sunday School. The budget for this year is \$14,750 with \$2,000 assigned to benevolences. In addition, a special fund of \$840. Morning church services are broadcast each Sunday at a cost of \$840 which is raised separately from the budget.

Included in the church program for the past several years are special activities for soldiers stationed in the area and several additional services for Eskimos who have been in Fairbanks since the outbreak of the war.

Rev. N. Harry Champlin

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CORDOVA, ALASKA 1909

The records of this Church show that it was organized by Dr. S. Hall Young, Presbyterian General Missionary for Alaska.

Dr. Young came to Cordova from Fairbanks via Nome and Seattle, arriving here in Cordova Nov. 17th 1908. He secured a meeting place at once in the Burke Hotel and held both morning and evening services the following Sunday.

During the following week he rented quarters, for the winter, in the basement of the Cordova Drug store and fitted it with pews. Here he held services 3 Sundays out of each month. The fourth Sunday he held services at Valdez. This continued throughout the first winter. The next spring the ground floor of a building belonging to George Dooley was rented and services held on Sundays and Wednesday Evenings.

The use of the Commissioner's office was granted for religious services in the fall of 1909. In September of that year a Board of Trustees of the Presbyterian Mission was elected. Plans were drawn for a Church building and a manse. Subscriptions from individuals were secured and a request was made to the Board of Church Erection in October. By the middle of December the Manse was completed and occupied by Dr. Young and his family. On February 6th the first service was held in the new church building.

On February 20th, 1910 the Church was formally organized by Dr. Young according to the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church with 22 charter members. In this group were 9 Presbyterians, 2 Congregationalists, 1 Lutheran, 3 Baptists, 4 Methodists, and 1 Salvation Army member. Two were accepted upon confession of faith.

Dr. Young continued as Pastor until the fall of 1910 when Rev. M. Egbert Koonce, Ph. D. took over the work on commission from the Board of Home Missions. Shortly after his arrival the Church began to lose heavily in members and attendance because of the exodus of construction workers. The work on the new Copper River and Northwestern R. R. was completed and many who had been the most active in the work now returned to the States. By the end of 1911 the population of Cordova had dropped to 600. However, the Lord continued to bless the work and new members came along to take the places of those who left.

The following have served as Pastors in this Church:

Rev. S. Hall Young, D. D., Oct. 1908 to October 1910  
Rev. M. Egbert Koonce, Ph. D., Nov. 1910 to summer of 1913.  
Rev. Jas. L. McBride, spring of 1914 to May 1915.  
Rev. A. G. Shriver, March 1916 to the spring of 1920  
Rev. R. S. Nickerson, spring of 1920 to April 1923  
Rev. F. G. Sherer, October 1923 to summer of 1925.  
Rev. W. A. Couden, winter of 1925 to Sept. 27, 1927  
Rev. B. J. Bingle, May 17, 1928 to Sept. 1, 1935  
Rev. Wm. A. McAdoo, Oct. 19, 1935 to April 1936  
Rev. R. S. Peterson, July 8, 1936 to Sept. 1, 1943  
Rev. D. H. Crawford, May 27, 1940 to June 1, 1943.  
Rev. R. L. Wotring, June 27, 1943 to Oct. 10, 1947.

Rev. Carl C. De Mott - Pastor

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH    ANCHORAGE, ALASKA    1916

The First Presbyterian Church was inaugurated in 1916 by Reverend James Mc Bride, pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Cordova, Alaska. After taking a trip to the nearest point to Anchorage by boat, he walked overland until he came to the site of the railroad camp which was to be the southern terminus of the Alaska Railroad. When the engineers had completed their surveys and lots were placed for public auction, Reverend Mr. Mc Bride chose two lots at 5th and F Streets. These lots are at the very hub of our thriving city.

The community for many years was a railroad camp. Some growth occurred after the installation of the railroad because it opened some interior country to mining. The only way in and out of Anchorage was by rail or boat. The road system had to await the project of the Matanuska Valley, which was born in 1937. Many an old timer has said that the depression did not materially hamper Alaska, but we can observe that Alaska did not grow -- growth awaited the preparation for war in 1940. General Dale Gaffney and his staff surveyed the outlying section of Anchorage and from their recommendations arose one of the largest forts in Alaska. The influx of workers and technicians to build Fort Richardson and Elmendorf Field was the beginning of the third stage in Anchorage's growth: first being the railroad; second, the growth of mining; the third the building of the Army Base. Some of the older folks in the congregation can remember when this church had more in the choir than it had in the congregation.

Our annual report will show close to 500 enrolled in the congregation. The average morning attendance is 275 plus and in the evening between 50 and 80. The church budget, which in 1937 was \$2382, will be in 1949 in excess of \$27,000. The church has accepted a benevolent budget of \$5033.

Typical of what has happened a hundred times during these construction days of Alaska could be summed up in the statement of a young woman from Pennsylvania who said, "I had to come to Alaska to find God". Hundreds of our young people have had their Christian experience crystalized since they have worked with the church in the Territory.

Rev. R. Rolland Armstrong - Pastor

For the Fiftieth Anniversary meeting of the Yukon Presbytery, this church hasn't much to offer, since some of my predecessors did not leave any trace of their activity during their service in this Mission. But what is on records I am forwarding to you at this time.

Following are the minutes recorded by Dr. Henry W. Greist:

Olgonik Presbyterian Church of Wainwright, Alaska, was organized on June 27, 1923. Dr. H. W. Greist had spent the week of Jan. 7-15, 1922 in the village accompanied by Elders Roy Ahmaogak and Foster Panigoc and held some six services evangelical in character, visiting the sick and calling at homes in the interim. At this time a "mission committee" consisting of Wm. Shoudla, Ben Tagarook and Steven Segevan were appointed to look after the local religious interests in absence of the missionary, and this committee continued to function until the organization was perfected as above.

In April, 1922, a second itinerary was made, and evangelistic services were held throughout the week, with several conversions, baptisms, etc.

In November, 1922, the third itinerary occurred, and again a week was devoted to evangelism, with religious services at some hour every day - generally at night, and the sick visited in the day and families seen.

In February, 1923, another week was spent by the missionary in Wainwright, much religious service and teaching had, and souls were blessed, the sick seen and cared for.

In June 18, 1923, Dr. Greist left for Wainwright with Elder Roy Ahmaogak arriving the 21st and a very active week was had in teaching, evangelism, etc.

On June 26, 1923, the congregation after sermon unanimously voted to organize as a church, and asked the missionary to proceed thereto. Elders Roy Ahmaogak and Job Kunudla of Barrow church being present, certificates of membership transfer were granted the following members of Ootkeavik (Barrow) Presbyterian Church, all now residing in Wainwright, and present at this meeting, and requesting same. (End of quotations).

Following these records there were 75 charter members transferred and organized as Wainwright (Olgonik) Presbyterian Church. It is noteworthy that out of this 75, 55 have passed away up to this present time.

According to the records Dr. Greist made itinerary to this newly organized church three times a year up to the year 1925. In his absence the newly elected elders took charge of the church services and the Sunday School. The elders elected at the time of organizing were Ben Tagarook, Morris Neakok and Alva Nashoalook. In the summer of 1925 Greists went out on a furlough to the States.

Dr. Newhall arrived and took over the mission work in Barrow and continued itinerary to Wainwright church three times a year. Dr. Greist was retained in the States for three years and Dr. Newhall served in the capacity of ordained minister while as we later found out, that he was not an ordained minister.

WAINWRIGHT MISSION . PAGE 2

Dr. Greist returned to Barrow the summer of 1929 and resumed his missionary work there visiting the Wainwright church at regular intervals with dogmushers such as Elders Bert Panigeo, Andy Ungarook, Foster Panigeo and Roy Ahmaogak and at times with Ned Nushunginya.

As to what happened when Percy Ipalook took over the Mission here there is no record. Before Percy was sent here Rev. Fred Klerckoper who relieved Greists also made his itinerary as the former Missionaries did and helped the Wainwright church in the same capacity, that of holding session meetings, serving Communion and administering baptism. I also had the privilege of mushing a dogteam for him several times. Records of his activities in this church are no where to be found alos. But you can be sure that each and a ll of these missionaries added to the church "such as should be saved."

The year 1940-41 found the writer in charge of the church here during the leave of absence of Percy Ipalook for a year in the States. During the summer of '41 Percy returned and continued his services as an fully ordained minister and continued his services until spring of 1943 when he was transferred to St. Lawrence Island and the writer was sent here to take charge of the mission work, as a lay worker. Was in charge of this mission for two years and two months then was transferred to Barrow again to relieve Rev. Klerckoper who was leaving the field for good. The spring of 1946 found the writer for a year in the States. The spring of '47 found him back at the Wainwright Presbyterian Mission fully equipped to assume the full responsibility of an ordained minister. This was made possible by initiative of the Board of Nation Missions and the Yukon Presbytery. During the vacancy the elders and the Sunday School teachers faithfully took charge of all the church activities.

The present membership of the church is 136, Sunday school enrollment of 196. The New Year finds an increase of 10 new members and 9 infant baptisms and two marriage ceremonies.

Sincerely in the Master's service

Rev. Roy Ahmaogak - Pastor

## BARTER ISLAND

The year of 1932, I went down to Barrow with my family to study to be a missionary and Dr. H. W. Greist taught me out of the Confession of Faith and Shorter Catechism. In May 7, 1933 I received the license and in same month, my wife and family and I start for east to Barter Island with the dog teams. As we went along the coast I am carry on the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every people we met. It take us about three weeks. When we were short of dog feed, we hunt seals. At the times the seal crawl on top the ice to sleep on the ice. A man should know how to crawl to a seal to get close enough to shoot it. That year the people along the coast hard up on food. When we came to some family, we had to share out to them out of our little food.

When I settled down at Barter Island, I used to go to the people visiting them and hold services. The first time I came to this part of the country some of the people never see the minister and never hear the word of God. That the kind of people, I am enjoy to teach, when I am explaining to them to make them understand that Jesus came into the world to save the people from their sins. Some of the people did not know what the sin mean to them...

Some time I met hard one of some young people. They made fun out of me, because I preached Christ; because they are in wrong crowd; but I never give up to preach to them and finally they are become to understand what the religion means to them. Sometimes I use to go down the coast with the dog teams and go to every family and preached to them and in summer I traveled with my launch. Lots of time I had been travel in big swell . . .

One time, we can not go through because the ice too thick, we pulled our launch to the shore to wait to open again. We waity two days the ice was open out a half mile. I told the boys, "We can not stay here, not safe place." The boys start to cut ice with axes and while they cutting ice, two boys fall through the ice and start again in the night until we got the Island again is about 5 miles from Barter Island. The next day, we got home. The family at Barter Island were very glad to see us again. That was in Oct. 2.

...We always hold little service before we go from the people. Lot of time I found the people have nothing to eat and I have to give them out of my own food. You see how much the hungry children are looking to have their stomach fill with the food; but still even they are hungry, they are eager to listen to the word of God.

...I take old couple's picture then I find out those people never had any picture taken because they believe that when they had been taken picture, they are going to die. And four years later I meet the same family after the old man died. I preached Christ to them again and after the service is over the old women said to me that just before the old man die, he told his wife that she should be the Christian. That old man use to be a devil doctor. You see how listen to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

One time when we down to Barrow and stay with Rev. Samuel Lee for one week when we start to go back, Mr. and Mrs. Lee gave me little Christmas boxes. When we got the people, I gave out some to the people and those people said they have Christmas in August and they were very thankful for what they got. It is very nice the Christians sent the Christmas boxes for the Eskimos to make them very happy. How much more they are happy when they hear the word of God. You see how the people welcome you with big smiling of their faces.

BARTER ISLAND PAGE 2

I hope to go around more to the people, but can not go sometimes, When I am not go, I write some Bible translations and send them to the people. Most of these people around here can not read in English but they read translations. No school. That only way I teachd them read the Bible every night and some of them are doing good.

One time couple of old folks down at Collville River that was ten years ago. I walk up to them two times is about 15 miles walk. I preached to them and oh how much they are willing to listen to me and lean over toward me and told them how Jesus came into the world to save sinners. As I am saying the words they understood them. After that, the man talk with me quite a while that they never understood them until they were listen to me.

The people should understand really the word of God and we should make them understand. One family I met in Sakvakniktook River. I had been with them nearly a month. George Wood, their father, told me, after he had been listen to the word of Jesus that some people used to make fun out of me and he use to help them and he said now I am understand Christ, that you preach and he tells me that I am preaching truth and the people had been prick in their heart and called me bad man, that the kind I want to preach. I don't want to preach just to please the people, but convicted them of their sins. After I left these family, they are happy family. Sometimes some white people tried to give me whisky and only said no and they make themselves ashamed.

Too much for 59 years old man travel. I should have good equipment so I can go around easier. I should buy snowmobile; but still hard to get gasoline; But still good teams are always ready but can not go when have no food, just like no gasoline for the engines. Even though without those things, I am ready to preach to the people.

...Last June I went down to Barrow by Army plane to meet my head man Rev. J. Earl Jackman and I met him that first time we meet each other and other five ministers and they went back quickly....This fall, I got sick and I went to Fairbanks with my wife and stay with Rev. N. Harry Champlin and they treat us better than brother and sister. I preach to the Eskimos on Sunday at 3 o'clock p.m.

....When we arrived home, all family ran out to meet us just before we get to the house. We are very happy to get home. We praise the Lord that He take care of us while we were traveled. We will meet some day, when our Lord Jesus Christ call us to him. We must be ready to meet Him.

--Written by Andrew Akootchook  
Native lay-evangelist, Barter Island

## PALMER-MATANUSKA VALLEY -1934; WASILLA-1948

When it became certain that the Federal Government was going to plant a colony in the Matanuska Valley in Alaska the Presbytery of Yukon appealed to the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. to adequately care for the field according to the agreement with the other Protestant Churches maintaining work in the Territory, by sending in a full time pastor. The Board responded favorably, and Rev. Bert J. Bingle of Cordova was chosen for the position.

...The first service of any church held at Palmer was conducted by our pastor on May 12th, 1935 in a tent occupied by the architectural division. Thirty-five persons were present...That evening an informal getting-acquainted service was held, and the tent was so full that the occupants once seated dared not stand for fear the floor would break down.

...Work was begun on a Community Hall about one week after the first of the families arrived. This Hall would furnish a meeting place for the colonists on all occasions: business, social, literary and religious. The men went into the woods and cut poles for rafters and studding, logs for the foundation, and collected odds and ends of boards from everywhere in camp and fitted them into the formation of the Community Hall which was the first building to be used for worship at Palmer. The hall was completed and dedicated on the night of Memorial Day 1935.

After a period of quarantine, services were held at the M. D. Snodgrass ranch until permanent quarters could be put up, but the next move was into a tent on C Street. It was here that our first attempt was made to formally organize our congregation into a Church body. Folks of the Valley, old settlers and colonists, met on the night of August 29th, 1935, the pastor acting as chairman of the meeting. Mrs. Ray Wilkes was the secretary. A motion was duly made and carried that we form a temporary organization and proceed to the erection of a manse. Five hundred dollars had been granted for this specific purpose by the Board of National Missions . . . The manse was ready for occupancy about November 1st...The manse was used for a place of meeting by the congregation as well as by many other organizations of the community....

...Services continued to be held in the Manse until Palm Sunday of 1936 when the facilities of the colony gymnasium were used. Meanwhile a church council of seven members had been established of which Dr. Earl Albrecht was made the chairman, a constitution was drafted and adopted including a name for the venture.

The Board of National Missions gave \$1,500 toward the erection of a permanent church building and manse in May of 1936 and work was begun shortly after.

Victor Johnson was engaged as construction foreman and supervised the erection of the building. One could scarcely have guessed there could have been so much keen interest in our United Protestant adventure under the leadership of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., had they not seen the response to erect that building immediately after oats, wheat, cabbage, potatoes, etc., were fully taken care of out on the ranches. Our church Building which is thirty two feet wide and eighty four feet long, and has two wings each fifteen feet wide and thirty feet on the rear of the main building, and all seemed to shoot right up over night, - and that can almost be taken literally since a plenty of the work was done at night.

The hope was to get into the church for all services by Christmas, and that would have been realized had not old mother nature with masculine tendencies, as it is possible in Alaska, laid a grim hand on us and began to tighten up. While the men worked with as much fervor as heretofore and as many of them, yet our ten, fifteen, and twenty five below zero weather night after night made us forget all about getting into the building by Christmas, and we began hopefully to pray that we would have it finished by Easter.

Several staunch men came to our rescue who were experienced log builders... Mr. A. J. Swanson was kept busy shoveling snow and keeping the numerous stoves fired which were distributed throughout the building to thaw and dry the logs.....

Putting up those log trusses to span thirty two feet was interesting from any point of view, but the more interesting thing was to see how those men could handle those logs frozen like great icicles weighing hundreds of pounds, put them in place and keep them there. Then the eighteen men who came one day and put on the roof, - men were everywhere over that building and it sure went on fast. One day we froze and another we were drenched with rain--cold rain, - but there was not a shirker in the group.

Our building was not all an affair of the men, for the women came and worked like Trojans, too. After the roof was on they came day after day until they had packed all the oakum between the logs on the interior of the building. Then with paint brushes they saturated the logs with linseed oil. Noon meals were set up in the homes of the Superintendent of Schools, to doctor, and the colony manager, on different days, just as they were for the men, - and these events were as enjoyable as picnics.

When the day came for the dedication of the church there was scarcely a protestant man or woman in the valley who did not look with pride at that unique and substantial building and say, "That is my church, and I helped to build it with my own hands."

On April 11, 1937, the new church was formally dedicated, and in the same service, the Rev. Bert J. Bingle was installed as pastor by members of the Presbytery of Yukon. We now worship in an attractive and commodious house of worship, valued at \$10,000, provided for by donation of cash, time, labor, and materials. There has been much sacrifice, and so we seek the gracious benediction of God upon us evermore.

The United Protestant Church of Palmer was officially enrolled in the Presbytery of Yukon in session at Anchorage April 10, 1937.

--Bert J. Bingle

## FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 1947

During the summer of 1943, the Rev. R. R. Armstrong, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Anchorage, became interested in a new addition which was developing southeast of town. As a result a Sunday School was started which met first on the lawn, and later in the basement of a log house at the corner of 11th and East G. As the group continued to grow, and the section gave promise of further development, it seemed wise to get some sort of permanent building as soon as possible.

Ideas and plans were talked over for some time. It was getting late in the fall, and something had to be done immediately. Relying completely on faith (from which came the name, "Faith Presbyterian Church") Rev. Armstrong started out one morning to get a building. Mr. Chester Petersen donated a lot at 12th and East D. A Mr. H. Johnson, Ketchikan Spruce Mills, Anchorage Sand and Gravel, and Juneau Lumber Company, all made liberal donations of time and materials. It would be difficult to name all the persons who helped erect the building. One man's help was especially appreciated: 'Red' Langley who acted as foreman of the project, and gave many long hours' work. About \$1800 cash also went into the building, part of which was made available by the Board of National Missions.

Rev. and Mrs. Armstrong and Miss Betty Braun (D.R.E., First Presbyterian Church) worked tirelessly those first three years getting the Sunday School, Church and Ladies Aid organized and going. Later Miss Thelma Glenn took Miss Braun's place. Others, too, from First Church helped in the project. Sunday School and Church services were held Sunday afternoons.

In the spring of 1947 the people of the community petitioned Presbytery for a minister, and to be organized as a congregation. The Mission Board suggested the Rev. Fred Koschmann, formerly of Anchorage, then in Seminary, to be pastor. He arrived the summer of 1947, and was duly called by the group on Dec. 15, when Presbytery organized a congregation, and installed Rev. Koschmann as pastor. At that time 15 persons were listed as charter members, and 55 were enrolled in the Sunday School.

Since organization, the membership has grown to 26, and the Sunday School enrollment to 82.

The community has grown greatly, and the church now serves a district approximately 12 blocks square with a population of about 3500. A new building is being planned for erection the summer of '48, at the corner of 14th and East G, which should make possible a greater service.

Rev. Fred Koschmann - Pastor

## HIGHWAY MISSIONARY

As Industrial and Sunday School missionary Rev. Bert Bingle performs what are, probably, the most varied services in the entire Presbytery. The total area covered by Rev. Bingle each year is a staggering figure in itself, but exactly what he means to the people with whom he comes in contact is something only they themselves can know.

In 1941 the Board of National Missions felt the need of an Industrial and Sunday School Missionary, this type of work being extinct since the departure of Dr. Young and Dr. Marquis. Rev. Bingle was chosen for the task and he began his work among the various army and civilian construction crews along the Alaska Highway then in the process of being built.

His first trip over the new area was in October of 1942. Rev. Porter, the civilian chaplain invited him to cover his fourteen camps with him and have worship with more than 2000 men.

The work was so successful that permanent programs were started at various points along the highway. Since that time Rev. Bingle has visited Northway, Tanacross, Tok and Dot Lake regularly many many times. From time to time he includes more out of the way stops in his itinerary. He ministers to Indians, CAA personnel, highway maintenance crews, roadhouse proprietors and pioneer families.

He arranges special programs several times throughout the year and assists in community projects in general. Students from the University of Alaska, young people from the Fairbanks church, and other interested persons join him gladly in many trips.

During a period when there was no protestant chaplain at Big Delta Rev. Bingle held Sunday services there frequently.

At various times through the year he visits the Arctic Contractor oil camps at Umiat and Barrow.

Another part of Rev. Bingle's work is done along the Alaskan Railway. Here he meets with the miners and various maintenance crews. Regular points visited are Gury, Healy, Suntrana and Summit.

The various creeks, such as Fox, in the Fairbanks area are included in his field.

In covering his vast field Rev. Bingle utilizes an automobile, dog sleds and an occasional airplane. The weather seems to have little effect on his plans but it is a constant factor in his work.

The work of the Industrial and Sunday School missionary is being constantly increased as the population of the interior increases and new settlements grow and old ones present new problems.

Rev. B. J. Bingle

February 26, 1949

Dear Friends of the Fairbanks Church,

My husband, Rev. Howard Moody Frank, was appointed by the Board of National Missions to Chena, Alaska for a period of three years in May 1904. He was graduated from Princeton..we were married...and left immediately for Chena. We arrived in Dawson July 1st expecting to change steamers there, but because of...a strike there were no boats running...

We waited 10 days...and then my husband bought a 16ft. rowboat for \$16.00. We loaded our supplies and trunks aboard and accepted the offer of an old sourdough...who claimed he had been down the river before and..could be our guide. ....We arrived at Eagle about 4 A.M. and regardless of the time of day we found the little log cabin manse and knocked on the door...Mr. Ensign answered the door and cordially invited us in. Mrs. Ensign scurried around and cooked us a fine breakfast.

Mr. Ensign had his bag all packed to catch the boat when it should come along for Presbytery meeting at Rampart. He was quite anxious to go because his station was lonely and the fellowship with the Presbyters was very desirable. It was decided that he should go along with us although we would be very crowded.....

In due time we arrived at Rampart where we remained as guests of Rev. Koontz for two days. Presbytery meeting was held with five ministers and two wives. Mr. Ensign was to return by steamer whenever one might come along.

We floated on the Tanana river to a small town called Gibbon where we found a small river steamer ready to pull out for Chena 300 miles up the Tanana..... Dr. S. Hall Young built a church at Fairbanks and a small shack-of-a-manse of lumber. We enlarged the log building at Chena and used the front part for the audience room and the rear was living quarters.

Every other week Mr. Frank would walk (he later had a sled with one dog, at first, and then later two dogs) the ninety mile circuit from Chena to Golden and then to Cleary Creek and also to another spot. It was a hard trip and a few times I accompanied him. We held services in the roadhouses (sometimes the bars were covered with a cloth and sometimes they were not).

The third year we were there Dr. Young wanted to go to Nome so he asked us to go to Fairbanks to take care of the work there as it seemed, to him, of most importance.

It was a strenuous life. All our water came from a waterhole in the middle of the river. If the minister didn't carry it himself in 25 gallon coal oil cans on a yoke over his shoulders he paid 25¢ per can to a man who delivered it in a small tank which had a stove in it to keep the water from turning to ice. Twenty-five cents per can made Monday wasy-day rather expensive.

Fairbanks burned down (the entire business district) in 1905 but it was quickly rebuilt.

The work was small, discouraging and unorganized. Christian people were few. The town had about five hundred people when we landed at Chena in July 1904 but by the time we left in 1907 there was a population of 10,000 in Fairbanks and as many more on the creeks and surrounding country.

We have watched with interest the steady development of the work there, and we wish you all success and ask God's blessing on your anniversary celebration.

Ruth Frank Ensign

From a letter written by Dr. Condit on the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of the Presbyterian Church in Fairbanks.

Dear Friends,

...It was the privilege of Mrs. Condit and myself to serve as leaders in the Church enterprise at Fairbanks from the Spring of 1905 to June of 1913. Our experience there was characterized by both bumps and blessings, with the latter predominating.

The first bump was the price of food. The unit of exchange (aside from the Post Office) was the two bit piece. Oranges two bits apiece, eggs the same, outside meat from fifty cents a pound and up. My first reaction was "where to we go to eat?" for there were six mouths to fill.

That bump was smoothed out pronto. The mountain sheep and moose, to say nothing of fresh water fish and grouse, so far surpassed "tame meat" that we would have nothing to do with the latter....

A second bump was the church debt. We found a neat frame structure heated by two huge wood burning stoves which monopolized much heating space, home made benches with straight up and down backs adapted to the stiffest kind of straight backed Presbyterian, but all in all an attractive house of worship.. One of the first legal documents belonging to the organization to which I was introduced was an acknowledgement of indebtedness in the sum of several thousand dollars...But the Trustees and the Ladies' Society bade me be of good cheer. They assured me that this financial obligation, which in a way affected our church credit standing, would be wiped out, and it way. In two years the note had been paid.....

This review would be incomplete without reference to the very satisfactory experience in conducting services on the creeks. Among the heart warming memories of those days were the warm receptions received from the creek folks. This was by way of compensation for frigid atmospheric conditions.

Cordially yours,

James H. Condit

February 26, 1949

Dear Friends,

I was stationed at Eagle in the months of April and May in 1903. I went over the ice and snow to Chena and began the preaching station there. I made several trips to Fairbanks but did not preach there but one Sunday. I did a great deal of calling in the interest of our church. I built a good sized cabin at Chena which was used as a hospital until Mr. and Mrs. Frank came. It was thought, then, that Chena would be the larger of the cities but time has proven that Fairbanks is the city of the Tanana country.

I am thankful that I had some small part in the beginning of our work in that great country. I returned to Eagle and Mr. and Mrs. Frank came to take up the work. Mrs. Frank is now Mrs. Ensign, and she will give you a short account of their work at Fairbanks and surrounding territory.

Most sincerely yours,

Charles F. Ensign

Portland, Oregon March 8, 1949

To THE PRESBYTERY OF YUKON  
in FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY ASSEMBLED:

Dear Brethren:

Your communication arrived a few days ago and it was not possible for me to sit down and indite even a very brief reply. I am just recovering from a recent attack of Influenza. So, if this letter of congratulation, sincerest good wishes and prayerful remembrance should either close suddenly or trail off into reminiscent area, do not be greatly surprised. However, although I am now an "octopus" as a small neighbor said when he was trying to say "octogonarian", I can't imagine myself ever becoming so old and cranky that I could lose my lively interest in younger folk, especially you younger people upon whose shoulders must rest the complex and distracting problems of both the present and future years. Go bravely to the tasks for service is man's greatest privilege. I do daily think of you and the old friends who, if still living, are doubtless scattered far and near in that beloved country. I love to think that God still loves them every one; and that, wherever they are, somebody ministering in the spirit of love will find them.

Yes, well do I remember my arrival in the PRESBYTERY OF YUKON in late autumn of 1917. The hurried effort to get chapel and living-quarters ready before winter could set in! It was well below zero the day we finished working, the building being usable and ready for dedication. It was twenty below on the evening of dedication, but there was a full 150 people present when I began to deliver the dedicatory sermon. When the man who was serving as treasurer announced that four hundred dollars had been received, I began to catch a glimpse of INTERIOR Alaskan generosity and spirit. Gold coins were in use then, and there were many fives, thens and twenties, with silver dollars enough to fill a gentleman's sock.

In the Spring of 1920, Nenana was swept by that sudden and devastating influenza epidemic. I was honored by being asked to serve on the CITIZEN'S COMMITTEE - a committee that served nobly, but was sometimes perplexed almost to distraction. Sick people by the score were brought in off the line; every available place was opened, and made available for the care of the sick and dying; all public meetings were closed etc.; everybody who knew anything about caring for the sick was drafted into service.

Mrs. Diven did not come down with the disease till after the main trouble was over. She was then very ill, and the Doctor said she must leave soon as she could travel; and that meant "the last boat" down the river. It soon got stuck in unexpectedly early ice and had to fight its way back. With that indomitable spirit of good will, so often demonstrated by Alaskans, a Committee met the returning boatload of disappointed travelers and treated them as tourists. They then settled down to await trail conditions which would permit them to go to the coast that way. Mrs. Diven went to her relatives in Ohio, there to spend the winter and get strong again, ready to meet me in the following spring, somewhere on the coast; and that "somewhere" turned out to be Wrangell. When the time came for my departure in the spring, a delightful company of Nenana friends arranged a farewell dinner, and presented me with a beautifully initialed watch. Yes, dear men, both the occasion and the richness of the gift were typically INTERIOR Alaskan; no other place like it.

Regretting that I can't be with you, to see old friends and share in your delightful fellowship, I shall continue to think of you both cheerfully and often.

Fraternally,

Robert Joseph Diven.

4602 Woodlawn Ave.  
Seattle 3, Washington  
March 21, 1949

To the Members of Yukon Presbytery  
Fathers and Brethren:

I want to congratulate you upon the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the organization of Yukon Presbytery.

....I started my career as a Presbyterian minister in the Yukon Presbytery though I have never attended one of its meetings.

In the year 1910 Mrs. Cram and I went as government teachers to Point Barrow. At that time I was an ordained Congregational minister. Since Barrow had no Congregational Church, we co-operated with the Presbyterians.

In 1912 Dr. Marsh, the Presbyterian Missionary at Barrow was going to the States to educate his children. He was an M.D. The Board of Home Missions had advertised for a medical missionary to take his place. There were no "takers".

The Board learned that I was an ordained Congregational minister in Good Standing. Doctor Thompson was then its Secretary. There was no chance to communicate either with Dr. Marsh or myself in connection with the matter. In those days there were no planes. No boats except in July and August. Two dog-team mails in the winter...afterward extended to three - that was all. So, without the knowledge of either the Marshes or the Crams, all arrangements were completed between the Board of Home Missions - now National Missions - and the Bureau of Education.

I was to be transferred from the Congregational church to the Presbyterian Church via: the Yukon Presbytery. This was done by letter.....I was relieved of the principalship of the school and Mrs. Cram was appointed in my place.

Dr. Thompson, secretary of the Board, requested the Stated Clerk of Yukon Presbytery to enroll my name as a Presbyter. Thus I became what might be called a "Mail Order Presbyterian".

We served the Barrow Church until we came out on our 1915 furlough. When we returned to our home in Seattle we decided to remain in the Presbyterian Church.

.....I want you to know I have put a lot of prayer behind the Yukon Presbytery. I have never had any patience with those who have wanted to do away with it and make Alaska into just one Presbytery.

In my early years in Alaska I prophesied that the largest cities in Alaska would be within its boundaries. Thank God I have lived to see that day come.

Sincerely yours,

Rev. D. W. Cram,

605 Woodlark Building  
Portland 5, Oregon  
March 4, 1949

Dear Brethren:

Your communication of February 21 regarding the coming meeting of Yukon Presbytery brings to mind many pleasant associations during residence in Alaska. In the period 1920-1925 the territory was in the grip of economic doldrums but at the same time it was a transition period from the days of being strictly a man's world to the recognition of the place of the family in the church and the community life. The moral courage of the people was high. Mrs. Scherer and I were never more warmly received than we were in Fairbanks and Cordova, even when the thermometer touched sixty below. Our ministry was a happy experience.

Of course Fairbanks will always be associated with the happiest moments of our lives, when our only son was born. He was later to be blown to bits and disappear literally into the sky over Belgium. Mrs. Scherer is doing a full time job of teaching in the week day religious schools in Portland. I am preaching in a neighborhood social service center, Friendly House, on Sunday morning, and directing a state program of parent education to prepare parents to give sex guidance to their children, as my work the rest of the week.

Mrs. Scherer and I join in sending greetings and congratulations to Yukon Presbytery on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary. You are living in a strategic area of the world, not only militarily but spiritually. Your failures and your successes in making your communities centers of decent living are broadcast to the world daily. The task before your Presbytery is as difficult as it is important. We, therefore, pray with you and for you that God's will may be accomplished within the bounds of Yukon Presbytery.

We hold in grateful remembrance the many friends of other years and we welcome your thought of us on this occasion.

Very heartily yours,

Fred G. Scherer

THE MARCISSA PRENTISS WHITMAN HOME  
Prattsburg, New York

17 March 1949

To the Stated Clerk  
Presbytery of Yukon

My dear Brethren:

Cordial greetings! You are celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the organization of the Presbytery. How much I would enjoy being with you on this occasion! It seems to me that nothing this side of Heaven would give me greater pleasure. I shall be thinking of you especially during those days of your meeting together, and shall earnestly pray that you may have much reason for gratitude for the history and accomplishments of the past years, and great hopes for the effective promotion of the best interests of the Kingdom of God within the bounds of the Presbytery through the coming years.

The work and welfare of the Presbytery were very much in my mind and heart through many years. I verily feel and sincerely believe that I had a vital part in an effort to carry along my corner of the load through a lot of time and experiences while I was member there, - from 1925 to 1943. For some time, around 1928, I found myself "the whole cast of characters for the show" - Moderator, Stated Clerk, Treasurer, Permanent Chairman of Committees, - when James F. Vernon and Robert Marquis left me alone and moved Outside. Was that a crisis! Before adjourning our final meeting together we took action authorizing the Stated Clerk to enroll incoming ministers as members upon his receipt of their Certificates of Dismission from other Presbyteries. Then soon there came along Rev. B. J. Bingle and E. L. Winterberger. In due time again we had the required number of ministers and elders to constitute a quorum for business. So, have we carried on, under difficulties to be sure, with no small contribution of time and money, with the faithful encouragement and support of the Board of National Missions, by the sympathetic help of the grand Secretaries for the Unit of Work in Alaska: Montgomery, Somerndike, King, and Jackman. Bingle will well remember with me the all-night stated meetings of Presbytery; that we might avoid spending two Sundays away from our respective fields for attendance upon the meeting of Presbytery, when we were not presuming to be taking a vacation.

I am still working for Alaska. Frequently, I am showing my Alaska pictures. Have over two hours' kodachrome motion show on the screen. Visited one of the churches of this Presbytery, Steuben-Elmira, last Monday night. Find people always much interested, and I enjoy telling the ALASKA STORY.

To you all of the present day I say: God bless you.

John E. Youcl

Versailles, Missouri  
March 16, 1949

Members of Yukon Presbytery

Fathers and Brethren:

I count it a privilege and a blessing to have begun my ministry as a member of Yukon Presbytery. The vision, enlightenment, and challenge of the Northland far outweigh in memory the disappointments and difficulties encountered in my Cordova ministry.

I am still called upon frequently to speak before missionary societies, Clubs and Churches on the subject of Alaska. The few kodachrome slides that I have of views about Cordova never fail to draw forth exclamations of awe and wonder at the Creator's handiwork in Alaska. Each meeting of sharing Alaska with others deepens the impression of the North upon me and stirs again the longing to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God in a land which is in grave need of the Spirit of Christ to guide and undergird her immanent development.

May God richly bless you in this fiftieth anniversary celebration and lead you on to establish in the coming years a more Christ-like Alaska.

Warmest personal greetings to my old friends and colleagues - The Alfsens, Armstrongs, Bingles and Champlins.

Very sincerely yours,

R. L. Wotring

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

51 Hawthorne Avenue  
Pittsburgh 5, Pennsylvania  
March 1, 1949

The Presbytery of Yukon  
in Alaska.

Dear Brethren,

Thank you for the opportunity of sending a word of greeting on your fiftieth anniversary. It has been a history of great struggle and of success. It is my prayer that the progress in building the Kingdom will continue.

I look back on my pastorate in the Anchorage Church as one of the happiest in my life.

Kindest regards to all of you and may the Lord continue to bless and keep you.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Boyd G. Cabbage.

Versailles, Missouri  
March 16, 1949

Members of Yukon Presbytery

Fathers and Brethren:

I count it a privilege and a blessing to have begun my ministry as a member of Yukon Presbytery. The vision, enlightenment, and challenge of the Northland far outweigh in memory the disappointments and difficulties encountered in my Cordova ministry.

I am still called upon frequently to speak before missionary societies, Clubs and Churches on the subject of Alaska. The few kodachrome slides that I have of views about Cordova never fail to draw forth exclamations of awe and wonder at the Creator's handiwork in Alaska. Each meeting of sharing Alaska with others deepens the impression of the North upon me and stirs again the longing to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God in a land which is in grave need of the Spirit of Christ to guide and undergird her immanent development.

May God richly bless you in this fiftieth anniversary celebration and lead you on to establish in the coming years a more Christ-like Alaska.

Warmest personal greetings to my old friends and colleagues - The Alfsons, Armstrongs, Bingles and Champlins.

Very sincerely yours,

R. L. Wotring

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

51 Hawthorne Avenue  
Pittsburgh 5, Pennsylvania  
March 1, 1949

The Presbytery of Yukon  
in Alaska.

Dear Brethren,

Thank you for the opportunity of sending a word of greeting on your fiftieth anniversary. It has been a history of great struggle and of success. It is my prayer that the progress in building the Kingdom will continue.

I look back on my pastorate in the Anchorage Church as one of the happiest in my life.

Kindest regards to all of you and may the Lord continue to bless and keep you.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Boyd G. Cabbage.

## FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF YUKON PRESBYTERY

This Fiftieth Anniversary Meeting of Yukon Presbytery was held in the First Presbyterian Church at Fairbanks on March 24 through 27th.

The majority of the delegates arrived by train Wednesday evening and were taken to the homes of various members of the congregation who were their hosts.

Lunch and Dinner was served each day at the church by various organizations in the church. Hosts entertained their guests in their homes for Sunday lunch.

Dr. L. David Cowie of the University Presbyterian Church in Seattle, Washington was featured speaker of the meeting. He presented two special series. One was based on the Book of Romans and included three addresses entitled: "Righteousness Required", "Righteousness Revealed", and "Righteousness Realized". This series was primarily intended for the delegates. The other series given at the Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday evening popular meetings was generally entitled "Four Steps to Higher Living". The individual topics were: "Admit Christ", "Submit to Christ", "Commit all to Christ", and "Transmit Christ to Others". Special music was presented each evening.

Before Dr. Cowie became pastor of the University Presbyterian Church he was a pastor in Kansas City, Missouri. He is noted for his work with young people and he is a popular speaker with varied groups where ever he goes. He toured in Central and South America in 1946.

On Friday evening a special program was presented which portrayed some of the outstanding events in the fifty years history of the Yukon Presbytery. The program was in the form of a radio script written by John Bridges and presented by a group of young adults.

On Friday afternoon a tea in honor of the delegates and guests was given from 3:30 until 5:30 at the Manse.

The banquet on Saturday evening was a highlight of the meeting. The meal was prepared and served by members of the Ladies Aid. Mr. Leon Vincent presented a group of Alaskan songs, and the radio program "One Great Hour" was heard. Dr. Cowie delivered his address to a well attended meeting.

A meeting of the Yukon Presbyterial was held in conjunction with the Presbytery meeting. Miss Ellanore Ewing, Western Area Secretary for the Board of National Missions, was special guest and speaker for this group. Mrs. N. Harry Champlin presided in the absence of Mrs. R. R. Armstrong.

Dr. J. Earl Jackman, Secretary in charge of the Alaskan unit of work of the Board of National Missions, was a guest throughout the meeting of the Presbytery.

### Delegates were:

Miss Alice Green, St. Lawrence Island (Sevoonga), Rev. Percy Ipalook, Wales Rev. and Mrs. Victor Alfsen, Mr. Walter Mau, and Mrs. Don Irwin, Palmer Rev. R. Roland Armstrong, Mrs. J. Bowman, First Presbyterian Church, Anchorage Rev. & Mrs. Fred Koschmann, Mr. & Mrs. O. M. Olson, and Mrs. W. A. Nelson, Faith Chapel, Anchorage. Rev. & Mrs. Carl DeMott, Cordova. Mrs. Peter Nelson, Wasilla. Rev. & Mrs. J. Hackett Johnson, Woodland Park Chapel, Anchorage Rev. & Mrs. Sam Lee, Barrow. Mrs. Stingel, Anchorage. Mrs. George Parks, First Presbyterian Church, Anchorage.

JUN 27 1949

File

Yukon 50th Anniversary

ANNOUNCER: You are There! Through the cooperation of Station Y-U-K-O-N 1.

and the Fiftieth Anniversary Meeting of the Presbytery of Yukon we bring you a program designed to better acquaint you with the development of this historic Presbytery. Through the medium of radio we will hear eyewitness accounts of some of the great moments in the history of this Presbytery.

The time is early in the eighteen ninties. The place is the bleak shore of St. Lawrence Island. Tak it away \_\_\_\_\_.

REPORTER: This is really a strange sight. I have myself perched on a small hill here where I can see almost everything that's going on. Out from shore some distance is a two mast schooner and on the shore is a group of people who are chattering away making observations on the proceedings. The main activity now is the bringing to shore of the cargo of this ship. I can see bundles of lumber and other building materials being towed to shore where they are being piled neatly. I understand that this material will be transported to the site of this proposed building. This must be a wonderful project to inspire so much work among these people. I am hoping to contact the person in charge of this project if I can find him. I don't know exactly yet for whom to look. I have seen a man carrying a large tool chest about but he is so occupied with the supervision of this towing process that I haven't been able to catch his eye. Here he comes I'll see if I can get him this time. You sir ! You sir, with the tool chest! May I talk with you a moment ?

CARPENTER: Yes, I think I can spare a few moments.

REPORTER: I'm \_\_\_\_\_ of station Y-U-K-O-N and I would like to get some information from you.

CARPENTER: I'll try to be of help. I'm John McCarthy.

REPORTER: Could you tell us something of what's being done here?

CARPENTER: Why we're bringing building materials ashore and preparing to erect a wooden structure.

REPORTER: Yes, sir, I had assumed that. What I would like to know is what kind of a building is it to be and for what purpose is it being built ?

CARPENTER: This is the beginning of a Presbyterian mission station.

REPORTER: Is this the first such station here?

CARPENTER: Yes, this is the first, but certainly not the first in Alaska.

REPORTER: Is the missionary here ?

CARPENTER: No, I'm sorry but the missionary for this station has not even been secured yet.

REPORTER: Well, what is the point of building this house then.

CARPENTER: We shall have much better chances of securing a missionary if we can assure the applicants that a building for their use has been erected and can be occupied at any time. We

CARPENTER: are trusting that God will send these people someone. That's why we are going ahead with the house.

REPORTER: You certainly seem to have come prepared for work.

CARPENTER: With materials, yes, but I fear that I forgot one very important item.

REPORTER: Yes ?

CARPENTER: I have been very careful to bring one complete set of tools but only one set. I forgot that these people would have none. In otherwords, I wan to build a wooden structure quickly.....with one hammer.

REPORTER: That is going to be a problem but I imagine that you will find some solution. Thank you so much for talking to me. I shan't take any more of your time for I imagine that you are anxious to get back to work.

CARPENTER: Yes, I do want to finish this job. Goodbye.

REPORTER: Ladies and gentlemen you have heard the beginnings of the work here and now we are going to return you to our studios and later years to hear what became of this building. Now to \_\_\_\_\_.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you \_\_\_\_\_. Here in our studios we have an Eskimo woman who knew one of the original members of that first congregations. Mrs. Nyeh , would you tell us: was the building finished.

MRS. NYEH: Yes, it was finished by winter and the man went again in the boat.

INT. : Tell me, Mrs. Nyeh, how did the native men helping with the building drive the nails ?

MRS. NYEH: They used the jaw bones of the walruses.

INT. : A very good hammer. Now, Mrs. Nyeh, you knew Patrick Womkon's father didn't you ?

MRS. NYEH : Yes.

INT : I want you to tell us some of the things you have heard him tell about the first years of the mission.

MRS. NYEH : What things do you mean ?

INT. : Well, about the building first.

MRS. NYEH : When the building was finished the man who built it gave the key to one of the head men. They were proud of the building but no one understood yet, what it was for.

INT : When did the first missionary come ?

MRS. NYEH : Two or three years later, Mr. and Mrs. Gambell came.

INT. : Did the people understand them ?

MRS. NYEH : Not at first.

INT. : What did they do then ?

MRS. NYEH : They held services just the same and had school and soon the people and the Gambells learned to understand each other and then they told the people about Jesus.

INT. : Did the people want to listen ?

MRS. NYEH : Yes, when they learned to understand everything.

INT. : Now, tell me about Womkon's house.

MRS. NYEH : The Gambell built it for him.

INT. : Were there other houses like this one ?

MRS. NYEH : No, this was the first frame house to be used by Eskimo people on the Island. Womkon was very proud.

INT. : I imagine that this house is not there any more since it was built so long ago.

MRS. NYEH : No, it still stands. Womkon's son, Patrick, is now an elder of the native church.

INT. : Thank you, Mrs. Nyeh, The Gambells stayed on St. Lawrence for five years. On their return trip outside with supplies on an old boat they were all lost. The people loved the Gambells and they wanted to make their children and their children's children remember the work they had done and what had been done for them so they changed the name of their village from Sevuokok to Gambell. A two room hospital was built on the island by Dr. E.O. Campbell during his stay of nine years and he also established

the native store and building fund. The most famous missionary at St. Lawrence Island was Ann Bannan who was known as "The Praying Nurse". Nearly the entire population of the Island accepted Christ and His way of life through her ministry. Our friend the carpenter would certainly not recognize the Island today. There is not a single old type Eskimo house in either village and many of them are well insulated and painted. From buildings made with walrus-jaw-bone hammers to insulation and paint. The difference of two two ages and the made in bringing people, people anywhere, to Christ's way of life.

ANNOUNCER: The time is in April, 1909 at Barrow. Dr. Richmond Marsh is the missionary there. There is a meeting in session.  
\_\_\_\_\_ will take us there.

REPORTER : This is a meeting of the Eskimo leaders and Dr. Marsh to consider the establishing of a church at Point Barrow. Let's listen to Dr. Marsh.

MARSH : You all know that many of our people are now in Point Barrow and that they need a church. It is the duty of those here in Barrow to see that those needs are met. I think that it would be wise for us to organize a church at Barrow. What do you think about this Steven ?

STEVEN : They need the church now but maybe the people won't be so many always at Point Barrow.

MARSH : Why would they go away ?

STEVEN : Maybe people won't want whales as much sometime and then the ships go away and we Eskimos leave too.

MARSH : Perhaps, you are right, Steven, but while the people are there don't you think they need the church ? We can dissolve the church when the need is no longer there.

STEVEN : I know they need the church for it has been so wonderful here.

MARSH : I shall go ahead, then, and make plans for organizing this new church at Point Barrow.

OTHER MAN : Steven knows that the church is a wonderful thing for he was here when the first missionary came and told us about God and Jesus and that we should be good and live in God's way.

STEVEN : The first man to tell us about Jesus was Mr. Stevenson.

MARSH : Do you remember thwn that was, Steven ?

STEVEN : Oh, a long time ago.

MARSH : I think it was in 1890.

STEVEN : I was a little boy then. I went to the first school.

OTHER MAN : That is where you learned the songs, Steven, isn't it ?

STEVEN : Mr. Stevenson had a violin and he taught us to sing the songs in a book he had. In the mornings we would stand up and Mr. Stevenson would close his eyes and talk. We didn't understand then but he was praying. Soon we all learned to

do the same thing.

- MARSH : Yes, Steven, Mr. Stevenson opened the way for other missionaries to come to Barrow to teach the people Christ's way. At first, I know that it must have been hard for him since he was showing you so many new ways of doing things and so many new customs.
- STEVEN : He showed us Christmas, too. He gave us pencils, writing paper and bars of soap and pictures of other Eskimos. At first I didn't know what it meant but I was happy anyway. We all liked that
- MAN : A Christian Eskimo came to Barrow one time then and he helped Mr. Stevenson tell us about doing good.
- MARSH : He did such a good job of starting the work here that you will remember when I came here everyone was ready to listen and to learn. I shall always remember Easter of 1899 for then we organized our church with thirteen native members. That was a long way from the first school day of Mr. Stevenson.
- MAN : I am glad we are going to have a church at Point Barrow for the people because sometime they can sit and talk of what happened to them in the past like we are doing now.
- MARSH : It is good for us to remember the people that have gone before us and the things they have done for us but we must always plan for what is coming next.
- REPORTER : And the work was well planned and has continued to be at Barrow and Point Barrow. The church was established in Point

Barrow and served its purpose and just as Steven had thought the people did go away from the Point later and settled to the east and south along the coast. Therefore, in 1930 the session of this Point Barrow Church (called the Nuvuk Church) voted to dissolve the church and the members returned to the home Barrow church. Dr. and Mrs. Marsh left Barrow in 1911 and there was no regular appointed missionary until 1915 but work was carried on by Rev. Cram and Mr. Richardson who were teachers in the government school. It was under Dr. H.W. Greist that responsibility for the Wainwright area was assumed where work has been successful and there is now a separate church. Two native ordained ministers have come from the work in Barrow and a lay worker for Barter Island has been trained there. Today Barrow ministers not only to the native population but also to the white workers brought there by the various projects being carried on. A period of fifty years here, has seen the birth of a new era for this settlement. What was once a hunting and fishing village is now an industrial village with all its problems.

ANNOUNCER : It was in July of 1899 at Eagle that this Presbytery was born. You are there ! :

REPORTER: : I am speaking to you from Eagle, Alaska. I am standing in front of a small log house which has been prepared for the arrival of Rev. and Mrs. James W. Kirk who are to be the missionaries at this station and it is here that this first meeting of the Presbytery of Yukon is to take place. There is no place for a kitchen so a small tent has been set up adjoining the rear of the house. Here Mrs. Kirk will prepare her meals. It is, indeed, a very rustic setting for such a momentous occasion. The convenor of this Presbytery will be Dr. S. Hall Young, the man,

who perhaps more than anyone has made this Presbytery possible.  
 I see now that the small group is gathering inside the cabin.  
 I shall go in and allow you to hear some of this first meeting.

DR. KOONCE : Mrs. Kirk, you have already started to make this cabin a reminder of the homes we have left behind to come to Alaska.

MRS. KIRK : I shall certainly try to make my home in Eagle a comfortable place for our guests and always a reminder of our former homes but I do really want to think that now, Eagle is my home.

DR. KOONCE : You are very right. While we are here, our stations must be our real homes.

KIRK : I think the worst thing thus far are the kitchen facilities.

MRS. KIRK : I shouldn't mind cooking in a tent so much if it were not for the mosquitoes.

DR. YOUNG : Mosquitoes and summer in Alaska are the same thing, Mrs. Kirk

MRS. KIRK : Then I'm looking forward to winter, Dr. Young.

( F A D E )

REPORTER : The people gathered here are continuing to chat but Dr. Young will call the meeting to order very shortly, I think. Perhaps I should tell you just who will make up this Presbytery of Yukon. I have here a list of the members for the roll call: Here it is: Dr. Young (who is both convenor and moderator) Rev. James W. Kirk, Dr. Egbert Koonce and then the names of Dr. Haratio Marsh and Rev. Samuel R. Spriggs will be read

and listed as absent. These people are en route to their stations and will probably leave Eagle immediately after the meeting of the Presbytery to continue on their way. It is unlikely that these people will see each other again until the meeting of the Presbytery again next year. Then they will gather again to transact the business of the Presbytery and, undoubtedly, will compare notes on their various experiences throughout the winter. The majority of the group will arrive for the meeting by boat. I haven't heard the name of the next meeting place yet but I shall probably know before the end of this meeting. I see now that the talk is subsiding somewhat and that Dr. Young is drawing some papers from his briefcase. I think the meeting will come to order in a very few minutes.

DR. YOUNG : The meeting will come to order. May we rise for prayer.

Our gracious Heavenly Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast brought us this far in our venture to bring God to this great territory? to its native inhabitants and to the people coming here to make their livelihood and to those who come here sincerely hoping to make it their home. Grant us the courage and the strength to carry the work on to its fullest extent and to give these people the realization that without God their lives are nothing. Be with us now in this hour while we form this new Presbytery to carry on this work. Be with us in shaping its future ends and guide us in the direction of the churches and missions constituting it. Help us to make it a real glory to Thee now and in the years to come and make it a blessing to those who will be connected with it throughout its history. Give us wisdom now, we pray Thee, in our undertaking. We ask it in Jesus' name, Amen.

Gentlemen, before calling the roll I will announce that the petition offered to the General Assembly asking that a

Presbytery of Yukon be established has been granted. This Presbytery is to include all the work in the Alaskan interior.

I should like to read the document as it came to me." This certifies that the General "assembly in session at Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 26th, 1899, ordered the erection of a Presbytery in the Yukon Valley and instructed the Revs. S.Hall Young, Horatio R. Marsh, Egbert Koonce, James W. Kirk, Samuel Rg. Spriggs and Harry P. Corser to meet at such place and at such time as may suit their convenience as said Presbytery; that Rev. S.Hall Young act as moderator until a moderator is elected, that in his absence the oldest minister present act as moderator; that the Presbytery be known as the Presbytery of Yukon; and that it be enrolled in the Synod of Washington." Rev. Kirk , I think I shall appoint you temporary clerk and proceed to call the roll.

Rev. Egbert Koonce.

KOONCE : Here.

YOUNG : Rev. J.W. Kirk.

KIRK : Here.

YOUNG : S. Hall Young is present. Now, Rev. Kirk, record Dr. Horatio Marsh, Rev. Samuel Spriggs and Rev. Harry P. Corser as absent. The election of a moderator is next in order.

KIRK : Gentlemen, I move that we elect Dr. Young unanimously as moderator.

KOONCE : I should like to second Rev. Kirk's motion.

YOUNG : Then with our limited group, the motion is carried and S.Hall Young remains moderator.

KIRK : I move that Rev. Koonce be elected stated clerk in the same manner.

YOUNG : Very well. I suggest that a resolution expressing our regrets at the absence of the other members of the Presbytery be adopted and mailed to them.

KOONCE : Very well, shall we say then that.....

(FADE OUT)

REPORTER : And so the Presbytery of Yukon was constituted and business of the first session was under way.

ANNOUNCER : The place for the next meeting of the Presbytery was Rampart, Alaska but due to transportation difficulty it was decided that the Presbytery should meet in Nome. This was in the summer of 1900 and Nome was a center of activity. Rev. and Mrs. Kirk are still at Eagle in 1900. They are sitting now in their living room talking with a young friend.

CHARLES : Isn't it wonderful that spring has come at last, Mrs. Kirk. I know you are glad to have our long days again.

ANNA KIRK : I certainly am. I'm sure that my case of spring fever this year will be the worst yet. I seemed as if the snow and ice would be here always. I began to feel as if they were becoming a part of us.

KIRK : I think I enjoy the change of diet more than anything else. Even if oranges on the steamer were fifty cents a piece I just had to have some.

- CHARLES : I don't think there was a single person in Eagle that didn't buy a few of the eggs at a dollar and fifty cents a dozen.
- ANNA KIRK : Well, a minister's family can't very well go in for much of that kind of spending. Otherwise we might be eating a half dozen eggs for two or three weeks.
- KIRK : I'm sure it is Anna's thrifty cooking that makes our food go so far, even our dollar fifty eggs. Our extra cash will be needed for our trip. Did you know about our trip, Charles ?
- CHARLES : No sir, I hadn't heard.
- KIRK : The Yukon Presbytery meeting is soon and Mrs. Kirk and I are planning to go.
- CHARLES : Is this the same group that held their first meeting here last year ?
- ANNA KIRK : Yes, this is just the second meeting.
- KIRK : It is to be held in Nome this year.
- CHARLES : That's a very long trip.
- ANNA KIRK : It certainly is. I must confess that I have some misgivings about starting but I am sure it will be an experience to remember.
- CHARLES : Who will take charge here while you are gone ?
- KIRK : Why, I suppose the mission will have to be closed.

CHARLES : We shall certainly miss having you here. We all enjoy the use of the books and the piano.

ANNA KIRK : That piano has certainly been a wonderful thing. I am sure that many people came here and to our services to hear and play that piano. Many of them probably would not have come otherwise. Our Friday evening musicales have been a real success, haven't they ?

CHARLES : Yes. What will I do on Friday nights while you people are away.

ANNA KIRK : I shall miss them too.

CHARLES : How long do you think you will be gone.

KIRK : I think I can arrange for us to make the round trip and attend the meeting in about four weeks.

CHARLES : Those will be very long weeks for the people of Eagle, sir.

ANNA KIRK : James, would you think badly of me if--if

KIRK : If what, Anna ?

ANNA KIRK : If I didn't go with you.

KIRK : But, Anna, I thought you wanted----

ANNA KIRK : Yes, James, I did and still : would enjoy some excitement but it would be such a shame to close the mission for a month.

CHARLES : Now, Mrs. Kirk, don't let anything I might have said keep you from taking this trip with your husband.

CHARLES KIRK : No, Charles, it wouldn't be anything you alone said but I know that we would be missed and I know that it certainly isn't necessary that I go. James must go as a delegate but I was going along for an exciting trip. It would probably be a very selfish thing for me to do....going on such a trip when I'm needed here,

CHARLES : I'm sure, Mrs. Kirk, that it wouldn't be at all selfish for you to go for you've been here all winter long with almost nothing to relieve the monotony of Eagle.

ANNA KIRK : No, I must stay and keep the mission open, the books and piano accessible and to meet the strangers who may come on the steamer and wish to hear about our work. It would be a shame to close the place and there is no one who would care for it while we're away.

KIRK : Won't you be afraid here alone ?

ANNA KIRK : There's no night in summer so I'm not afraid.

KIRK : What will you do Sundays ?

ANNA KIRK : Oh, I can talk to the Indians in the mornings for you know that very few of the white men will get up to come to a half past ten service. I'll enjoy hearing them sing their own Takudh hymns.

KIRK : What about an interpreter ?

ANNA KIRK : Stephen interprets well and I shall enjoy it very much. Of course there will be no evening service since white people would not want a woman to conduct meeting.

CHARLES : Don't be too sure about that. I think they would like song services and meetings something like a Christian Endeavor Society.

KIRK : Yes, I think they would enjoy that.

ANN KIRK : So you see, James, that I shall have quite a time of it. I shall miss you, of course, but I certainly won't be lonely.

CHARLES : I'm sorry for you to miss your trip, Mrs, Kirk, but we will be glad that the mission will stay open. I will ting the bell for the services and I can get some of the other fellows to help me in the general care of the place and to arrange for the pews on Sunday.

KIRK : Well, it seems that I lost on this. I see that I will be traveling alone.

ANNA KIRK : When you think about it , James, you know I'm doing the right thing.

KIRK : Yes, my dear, I suppose you are.

ANNOUNCER : Rev. Kirk left for Nome on one of the first steamers and Mrs.Kirk was left alone at the mission. There was a standing invitation to visit the military surgeon's wife, one of the officers caught greyling, came to supper and cooked them himself to prove that he was an expert. Friends brought fish, wild game, vegetables and fruit and their attentions were gratefully received.

ANNA KIRK : Sundays were hard but happy days. The indians with squaws, papooses and youths were always present in the mornings and a few white men came. The packer, a rough but jovial white man, appeared one Sunday morning, took a front seat with an air that indicated that he expected to be amused. The faithful interpreter was ill and some one said :

MAN : Little Paul interpret today.

ANNA KIRK : But Little Paul, a noted young indian gambler grinned, bashfully shook his head vigorously saying :

LITTLE PAUL : No, No, No.

ANNA KIRK : The packer faced about, pointed at him with authority and exclaimed:

MAN : Yes you kin, Little Paul. Now go ahead.

ANNA KIRK : Little Paul interpreted.

ANNOUNCER : The weeks turned into months and three months passed before Mrs. Kirk saw her husband again. The small pox quarantine had delayed him at Nome. So it was, when a minister attended Yukon Presbytery fifty years ago.

In the summer of 1904 there was a conversation in the office of Judge Wickersham in Fairbanks and from this conversation came the beginning of the church there.

Let's listen to them :

- WICKERSHAM: Good afternoon, Dr. Young. It is indeed a pleasure to meet you. I have heard a great deal about the splendid work you are doing for the Presbyterian Church and for Alaska in general.
- YOUNG : Well, sir, Alaska has become a part of me now and I do feel that everything I do for God and my church is also for the good of the territory.
- WICKERSHAM: I think you are entirely right.
- YOUNG : I'm glad you agree with me for I have come to ask you for help in beginning my work here in Fairbanks.
- YOUNG : Yes, I had suspected and hoped that, I was glad to hear that Dr. S. Hall Young was in Fairbanks. We have a very young town here, just a year old, in fact, and there is a very definite need and place for you and your work.
- YOUNG : Very well then, I think we can discuss the possibilities of getting a temporary meeting place first of all.
- WICKERSHAM: I don't think that will be too difficult. What ideas have you for a building, or have you looked about for a possible meeting place ?
- YOUNG : Well, I have held services in bars and dance halls numerous times. I need a building with space for a good group and I need a building that can be at my disposal on Sunday.
- WICKERSHAM: I hope, sir, that I can find you a more suitable meeting place here in Fairbanks than a bar. There are relatively few buildings, however, that could meet your requirements.

WICKERSHAM : In court yesterday I could hear thousands of hammers almost continuously and I thought of the various types of buildings being erected now-----oh, yes----- in court.....in court... Dr. Young, have you ever held services in a court house ?

YOUNG : No, sir, but it will be one more type of building for me to add to my other unchurchly meeting places.

WICKERSHAM : You have undoubtedly seen the structure. It is very well constructed of logs and is quite commodious and it won't be in use at all on Sundays. I think it should serve very well.

YOUNG : I'm sure it will. I'm also looking for some plot of ground where I might begin construction of a permanent church and manse, I have some locations in mind but I would like your opinion since you have been here longer than I.

WICKERSHAM : Very well, we shall go real estate hunting early in the week. Is your wife with you on this trip, sir ?

YOUNG : No, but I expect her to join me shortly from Skarway. She will be very pleased to ntice that there is a higher percentage of female population here than in some of our former stations.

WICKERSHAM : I think your wife will have some very congenial women with whom to work. I have talked to many of the ladies and I have found a large number of them to be Christians and experienced in church work.

Young : I am particularly with the better than average living conditions here than in other stampedes. I see that the water supply is abundant and sweet and that thus far you have been spared an epidemic. Maybe, the stampeders have learned to live in Alaska instead of die ?

WICKERSHAM: I sincerely hope so, Dr. Young.

ANNOUNCER : In this manner, Dr. Young began his services in the courthouse and when the church was finally constructed (the building now known as Young Memorial Hall) he organized a church of some thirty members and representing seven or eight different denominations. The work of the Fairbanks church has increased steadily and the church became self-supporting in 1941. The original building has been pushed back to face 7th St. and a newer sanctuary has been built. So much of the history of Yukon Presbytery is connected with Dr. Young. Here he is again in Cordova in 1910 just after organizing the church there. He is talking over the history of this church with a friend.

MAN : Presbyterian, Congregationalists, Lutheran, Baptists, Methodists and even a Salvation Army member! So there were all of those in the church you organized today, Dr. Young.

YOUNG : Yes, almost every place I go when I organize a church there will be a great diversity of denominations. But when Christian people in a neighborhood decide to unite into one Presbyterian Church there will be very little dissention and holding back because of denominations "back home."

MAN : I remember when you first came to Cordova in 1908. The first thing I heard about you was that " some preacher has rented the basement of the drug store for the winter and is making pews to put in it. "

YOUNG : I just held services there three Sundays each month; the fourth Sunday I went to Valdez. I got out of the drug store basement in the spring and George Dooley very kindly rented me the ground floor of a building he owned. So I felt that I had come up in the world, at least, one floor.

MAN : You held a weekday service there, too, didn't you ?

YOUNG : Yes, I was having a Wednesday evening service then. Very well attended too. I didn't last long in Dooley's building, you will remember, and that fall I went, not into a basement but into the Commissioner's office. I had been working for a church here all this time and that September a Board of Trustees of the Presbyterian Mission was elected and I was really under way.

MAN : You certainly do have a way of getting things done, Dr. Young.

YOUNG : Oh, I merely try to meet the needs of the people and give them a little prodding from time to time.

MAN : You have been quite successful here....from plans on paper in September to the first service in the church on February 1 And in Alaska, too ;

YOUNG : Yes. God has been good to us here.

- MAN : Dr. Young, I am wondering just how long our good fortune here in Cordova will last ? What will become of the church when the construction workers begin to leave.
- YOUNG : I imagine there will always be enough people in Cordova to keep our little church alive. No doubt many of our friends will leave but there is always a place for the church, no matter how small the work.
- ANNOUNCER : Dr. Young left Cordova in 1910 and shortly afterwards there was a great exodus of construction workers and the church has been small but an active one since that time.  
And now a quick jump of time and we're in Anchorage in 1940. Our reporter \_\_\_\_\_ is in the study of Rev. Boyd Cubbage at the First Presbyterian Church there. Here we go.
- REPORTER : Rev. Cubbage, the first thing I want you to comment upon is this recent survey of General Dale Gaffney and his staff of some of the outlying districts of Anchorage. Excactly, what do you think it means.
- CUBBAGE : As I understand it, it might mean that we are going to have one of the largest forts in Alaska.
- REPORTER : If this does happen, how will it affect your church ?
- CUBBAGE : In the first place, the construction work being done will bring a large number of transient and semi-transient workers to Anchorage even before the army arrives. It means that our facilities will be taxed severely and that we will of necessity have to revamp our program to include increased numbers and more varying personalities.

- REPORTER : What about your church membership if the proposed Army camp does materialize ?
- CUBBAGE : Our church membership will increase, naturally, but we must also consider the large number of persons who will attend the church and use its facilities but who might not join or move their letters
- REPORTER : I understand that your church here has been growing by leaps and bounds.
- CUBBAGE : Yes, if this army camp does become a reality this might be called the third period of expansion for the Anchorage church.
- REPORTER : Just when did the Anchorage church really get started ?
- CUBBAGE : Well, this church was organized in 1916 by Rev. James McBride who was the pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Cordova. McBride took a boat to the nearest point to the site of what is today Anchorage. It was then merely a railroad camp of the Southern Terminal of the Alaskan Railway. He walked overland until he came to the camp and I guess his first service there might be called the beginning of the Anchorage Church. The engineers were still making surveys for the town and when the lots were placed for public auction McBride purchased the two lots at 5th and F streets. It seems that his choice was good for this spot is at the very hub of little city.
- REPORTER : Well, that accounts for one of the three periods of this church. What was the second ?
- CUBBAGE : The growth in mining interests in this area contributed toward the expansion of Anchorage and our church.

REPORTER : And now I suppose you will call your third period, your army period if the camp is established.

CUBBAGE : It will be our army period and probably will be our biggest yet. You know that has been the experience of all small town when the army comes.

REPORTER : I'm sure you will be able to give the construction workers and army personnel a great deal: something definite to hold on to in their new environment and facilities for finding wholesome entertainment and good fellowship.

ANNOUNCER : The army came and it was Anchorage's biggest period. In the summer of 1943 Rev. R.R. Armstrong who followed Rev. Cubbage became interested in the new addition which was developing south-east of town. There was work to be done. Let's go with our reporter \_\_\_\_\_ our to Faith Chapel and hear what Mrs. Koschmann has to say about it.

REPORTER : Mrs. Koschmann, the first thing I want to know is just why the church is called Faith Chapel?

MRS. KOSCHMANN: That seemed the logical name since the church was literally built on faith and still exists that way.

REPORTER : Were you here from the very beginning of the project ?

MRS. K. : No, my husband was called to be the first pastor of the congregation in December of 1947.

REPORTER : How many people were in the congregation ?

- MRS. K. : There were fifteen people as charter members but fifty fi we were enrolled in Sunday School.
- REPORTER : Can you give some details of the establishment of this church?
- MRS. K. : First there was only a Sunday School which met on the lawn of the log house I showed you at the corner of 11th and East G. It later moved into the basement of the house and as the group kept getting bigger and bigger, it seemed a good idea to get some sort of really permanent building. Rev. Armstrong was successful in getting a **lot** donated to him by Mr. Chester Peterson. Several other merchants in town gave materials and funds and pretty soon a **building** was started. "Red" Langly was construction foreman and deserves a lot of credit for his work. Many, many people from the First Church of Anchorage helped in the project and it was mainly through their efforts that the Chapel lived through its first three years.
- REPORTER : The building is really a remarkable achievement for such a venture. It is a Faith Chapel.
- MRS. K. : I think that the very fact that it has been done with a faith that God would help us make a church, insures a spirit among the congregation which might be lacking if the venture had been an easy one.
- REPORTER : I think **you are** entirely right, Mrs. Koschmann. How many members have you now ?
- MRS. K. : We have 26 now and 82 in the Sunday School and we shall probably continue to grow.

REPORTER : I'm sure you will.

ANNOUNCER : The famous Matanuska Valley project of the United States government was one of the most widely publicized colonizing movements in the history of America. Our Presbytery had a part in this undertaking too. Back now to a day in the early spring of 1937 and Palmer, Alaska. Here's \_\_\_\_\_ to tell us what's going on !

REPORTER : We're on the inside of a log building which had certainly been well planned for the use of a growing community. The logs are peeled and this is going to be a really beautiful building. There are men still doing jobs on the roof and the log rafters but the main activity today is among the women. I'll see if I can get one of them to come over and tell us what they're doing. Hello !

GIRL : Hello.

REPORTER : I'm \_\_\_\_\_ from station Y-U-K-O-N and I want you to tell our listeners what you're doing.

GIRL : We're packing oakum into the cracks between the logs.

REPORTER : What's the purpose of that ?

GIRL : It insulates the building and makes it comfortable in winter.

REPORTER : I see some of the women have brushes.

GIRL : They're painting the logs with linseed oil.

REPORTER : It won't be long now until you will be having services here, will it ?

GIRL : We hope to be in by April .

REPORTER : With so much volunteer help, I think you will be.

GIRL : Eighteen men came one day and the roof went one.

REPORTER : Has the co-operation been this fine all through the project ?

GIRL : Oh, yes, its been wonderful. When the church is finished, I don't believe there will be a single protestant in the valley that won't have had a hand in it someplace. It is really going to be our church.

REPORTER : I wonder if you could give me some of the details back of the project.

GIRL : Oh, there's the man you want to talk to right over there. That's Rev. Bert Bingle. He's the man behind this . Besides , I have to help with the dinner now. We have it at the doctor's today.

REPORTER : Well, Goodbye.

GIRL : Goodbye !

REPORTER : Rev. Bingle is talking to a group of men but I'll get his attention.  
Rev. Bingle !

BINGLE : Yes.

REPORTER : I'm \_\_\_\_\_ from station Y-U-K-O-N and I want you to tell

us something about the history of this project.

49.

Tell me, Rev. Bingle, when did you come here ?

BINGLE : I got here on May 6, in 1935. I came from Cordova where I had been pastor.

REPORTER : Who was here when you arrived ?

BINGLE : A few Survey men and the civil engineer. There was a small group of carpenters that came on the same train that I did.

REPORTER : Where did you hold your first services ?

BINGLE : We had them in a tent that was used by the architectural division.

REPORTER : When was that ?

BINGLE : On May 12.

REPORTER : Many people there ?

BINGLE : Thirty five, which was a good crowd considering the number of people here.

REPORTER : When did you start with some sort of building ?

BINGLE : We finished a community hall of sorts on Memorial Day. It was made of poles, logs, and all sorts of odds and ends for lumber was very scarce then . We used the hall for church and other meetings.

REPORTER : Did you remain in that building until this one was started ?

BINGLE : No, we had an epidemic and our community building became a hospital and medical center. We were back into a tent. That's where we first began to plan a permanent building and an organized church. We got started and the Manse was ready by November.

REPORTER : I suppose your family was glad to have a permanent home, then.

BINGLE : Yes, they were, but the manse served many other purposes than that of just being our home. We had our church services there and that's where our plans for permanent organization were completed.

REPORTER : You must have built this church in the winter.

BINGLE : We did. Sometimes it was snowing, sometimes it was raining, cold rain, too; but those logs went right up. A lot of times they were frozen and weighed hundreds of pounds but somehow there were always enough men around to help put them in place.

REPORTER : This young lady I was speaking with a few minutes ago said that they were having dinner at the doctor's today. Is this a usual thing.

BINGLE : We're been having dinner at different places on different days for all the people who are helping on the church.

REPORTER : Thank you for talking with me. I'm sure this church has a great future, with such wonderful leadership and co-operation.

ANNOUNCER : Who knows, where the history of Palmer, or Fairbanks, or Barrow or any of the other churches will end. We've had fifty years of working together in Yukon Presbytery; we've had men like S. Hall Young, James Kirk, Marsh and many others; we have men today like Koschmann, Lee, Champlin, Bingle and all the others that are Yukon Presbytery; we'll tie ourselves to God's will and with His help make our history a glory to God: here we are, from St. Lawrence Island to Cordova, from Barrow to Anchorage; Eskimo, G.I., construction worker, sourdoughs and cheechako, covering a half million square miles of Alaskan interior. All together we can be a real NORTHERN LIGHT.

This script was written by John Bridges and was originally presented under his direction at the Fiftieth Anniversary meeting of Yukon Presbytery on the evening of March 25, 1949 in Fairbanks, Alaska.